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## PREFACE

When one has completed a work such as this, he realizes, even more forcefully than at any other period of his activity, that its sources in reality lie in the kindness, cooperation, knowledge and patience of others. It is a pleasure to acknowledge this indebtedness at this time.

Dr. Fred Eggan of the Department of Anthropology of the University of Chicago first suggested to me the possibility of undertaking this field study. Mr. Harold J. Coolidge, Executive Director of the Pacific Science Board of the National Research Council, under whose auspices and supervision the Scientific Investigation of the Ryukyu Islands (SIRI) Program was conducted, created an atmosphere in which it was possible to pursue one's work freely and independently. I am grateful to him and to his staff.

Funds were made available by the Department of the Army to the Pacific Science Board of the National Research Council. I received every courtesy from the military and civilian personnel of the Department of the Army both in Tokyo and in Okinawa. Brigadier General James A. Lewis and the staff of the U. S. Civil Administration of the Ryukyu Islands showed a continuing interest, and it was possible to work easily in Okinawa through their efforts.

Mr. H. E. Diffenderfer, head of the Civil Information and Education Department, which sponsored this study, gave his full cooperation both in encouragement and in administrative and clerical assistance. I have profitted from discussions with Doctor, then 1st Lieutenant, William Elmendorf and Dr. Allan Smith, both anthropologists, and formerly on the C I & E staff.

I also wish to thank Mr. Richard Varney of the Department of Food and Natural Resources and Taninato Choyō of the Ryukyuan Forestry Agency at Nago, Okinawa, for their advice and assistance in matters relating to forestry. Mr. Taninato was most liberal with his time and showed me personally several areas in the northern forest. He should not be held responsible however for errors or misinterpretations in the text.

My indebtedness to the people of the villages is even greater, and here I must confine myself to a few who either through their own knowledge or through the introductions they gave to others made it possible for me to gradually build up the body of information upon which this report is based.

In Hanashiro: Nakazato Ushikichi, a farmer and member of the Gushichan township council; Shiroma Kichiji, the present headman and a farmer; Sakamoto Genichi, former headman and operator of the rice mill; Nakazato Masao and his wife; Tokunori-san, a teacher of the Gushichan Junior High School and a resident of Hanashiro; Tamaya Yukio, a school teacher at the same school.

In Minatogawa: Moromizato Shinji, a school teacher of Aragusuku; Tamashiro Kamei, headman of Minatogawa-ikku and a fisherman; Uehara Shōichi,

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115 head of the Minatogawa Fishermen's Association; Kokuba Jūshin, a farmer and the village clerk; Moriya-san, the headman of Minatogawa-niku and a farmer; Irei Tokujun, principal of the Gushichan Junior High School and a resident of Minatogawa-niku.

My grateful thanks must go also to Mayor Usa and vice-Mayor Miji of Gushichan township, public officials of whom any people could be proud, and to Nakama Chichō of Minatogawa-ikku, Tokumoto-san, and Kokuba-san, also on the township staff.

In Matsuda: Ikehara Seiyei, a farmer, and his wife; Matsuda Kiyoshi, a young farmer; Nagamine Yoshihiro; Urasaki Kokichi, principal of the Matsuda primary school; Yoshida Yoshikatsu, a farmer; and Higa Hatsaki and his wife, and Ushiro Tokuye, headman and his assistants in the village office.

I am grateful also to the many residents of these villages with whom I talked and from whom I received hospitality. Without their patience in explaining many points, elementary to them often difficult for me, I could not have accumulated the data that are presented here.

121 The study was begun on July 15, 1951, and I returned to the United States on January 25, 1952. The period from July 15 to August 25 was spent in Hanashiro; from August 26 to October 20, in Minatogawa with frequent visits to Hanashiro, and from October 21 to December 10 in Matsuda. Later the three villages were re-visited for periods of a week to ten days each, following a preliminary analysis of the materials already gathered.

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423 have been affected by roads and trails which have now disappeared.

[115] Old residents[5] of Matsuda and neighboring villages were able to furnish more specific clues regarding the old system and its relation to other phases of village life. These old people estimated the [161] population of Matsuda at the close of the old system at about 360 persons, compared with the present population of 1368. The system operated under much less acute population pressure than exists today. [165] Deaths, especially from malaria, and a high infant mortality kept the population down, although introduced Japanese hygienic measures helped.

[311] Under the old system in Matsuda, there was a continual clearing of land, mostly around the settlement. There seems little doubt that land reclamation and clearing has been going on slowly from the earliest historical times in Okinawa. The land cleared remained under village ownership, but the persons who cleared the property were allowed to hold it for use without giving it up for periodic redistribution. Technical ownership remained with the village.[6] Fences and stone barriers were erected as a protection against the wild boar. But the large scale reclamation and the private ownership of genya land seems to have occurred after the close of the old system.

The dividion of lands at the beginning of the new system has set the boundary pattern of many plots. In Matsuda there were instances of land which has retained the same bounderies that it had under the old system. There was general agreement among the old that the form, boundaries, and areas of land plots have changed [428] very little since the times of the jiwari-seido. This would be par- [425] ticularly true in the case of property which had passed down through the first son. Changes came from the establishment of branch families, and sales and purchases. In these areas, however, buying and selling have been infrequent.

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423 The history of land tenure in Okinawa, therefore, is different
[171] from that of Japan with its long history of tenancy, whose accumulated problems finally led to the land reform of 1946 during the Allied occupation. The present system of land tenure in Okinawa is a little over 50 years old.

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423 The chief influences of the old system were to set in a form
311 recognizable to the present, the pattern of land holding, to establish land classification, and apply it on a very localized basis.

[115] 5 I am indebted here to Shinzato Zensuke of the village of Sokei (Ginoza-son), and to Oshiro-san of Matsuda village (Ginosa-son) both over 70 years of age for their recollections of the history of the system in Matsuda.

[114] 6 This differs from Goldschmidt's account, cited above, in that in this case the land became a usufruct, in the other actual ownership.

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Every parcel of land with its grade and type is mapped, a thoroughness in land classification which has not yet been approached in the United States. While the mapping is recent, the information was always available in the village records. Village owned lands are also a survival of this system, especially the forests in the north. Community owned property is much more modest in area in the south and confined to small parcels of forest or pre-war forest, school and public building sites, community ponds, and the like.

2

Present Land Tenure and Land Classification

The present method of land holding based on Japanese law went into effect at the end of the old land allotment system. The head of the family registered all lands, previously held as shares, in his own name. Apparently in the last distribution before the abandonment of the old system, men and women over 52 years of age received their property for life with the right to pass it on to their children. At the beginning of the new system, also, the wild land was still publicly held, but further clearing and reclamation got under way, and the genya land also began to be divided up and became part of private holdings about ten years after the new land law went into effect.

The new system of private ownership of land introduced buying and selling (baibai), tenancy (kosaku), and land speculation. There had been some tenancy under the old system apparently however it was on a village basis with one community renting from another. There has therefore been insufficient time to develop in Okinawa the widespread abuses associated with the Japanese land tenure system prior to the land reform of 1946.[7]

In all the villages studied, individual ownership is the rule with some informal tenancy. How an owner is not paid for the use of his land, the result of a Civil Administration measure to encourage maximum food production. Tenancy, as it was observed in the villages was usually an informal lending of the land: the use by a friend, relative, or neighbor of an unused plot.

The present system of land use and land tenure is a result of practices and customs developed under the old allotment system, combined with the introduced Japanese system of inheritance. The family system plus these two influences have brought about the modern customs of land inheritance, the distinctions in types of land, and the fragmentation and lack of contiguity in holdings.

7 Based on conversations with villagers in Matsuda. Uyehara, Yukuo made the same point in accounting for the low percentage of tenancy and the high percentage of independent farmers in Okinawa-ken, Ryukyu Islands, Japan. Economic Geography 9 (1933), 395-405. Reference on 399.

793 or her granddaughter might succeed her. In earlier times, priestesses
423 were unmarried. But with private ownership in land the fields owned by
428 the priestess were divided according to the new laws and fell into possession of the priestess' family.

793 Spencer pointed out in his discussion of their status in 1931 that
[791] they still had considerable influence. There was one in practically every village, although they were losing out to the female fortune tellers (yuta). Spencer cited the case of the principal of the primary school at Itoman who could get controversial plans adopted readily if a priestess sponsored them. This was over 30 years after the abolition of the old allotment system, and their economic power had vanished. But they were important figures in festivals and holidays. Their private services included advice and prayer on journeys and business undertakings. This brief summary of their past history will make the discussion that follows clearer.

793 The Japanese discouraged the priestess system, regarding it as a
178 superstition. In the years immediately preceding the war, the priestesses seem to have prospered more in the northern district of Okinawa. By 1951, the noros were virtually forgotten, victims of a long decline, Japanese discouragement, the war, public indifference, and the conviction, among the young and middle aged people, that the priestesses taught only superstitions (meishin) like the fortune tellers and the soothsayers.

Hanashiro had a priestess before the war; when she died, there was no young female relative to replace her. Now there are none in Hanashiro, Nagamo, or Hinatogawa. Their failure to revive after the war is attributed by the villagers to the influence of education among the people. In Hatsuda, there are some last survivals of the system, but the Ginoza priestess has also died, and there was no one to replace her.

793 Before the war, the priestess (noro in Japanese, nuru in Okinawan) and her assistants conducted services in Hatsuda.[6] The priestess, who was then about 60, lived in Ginoza village, and was carried by two men on a palanquin (kago) from her village to Hatsuda. The high priestess and her assistants constituted a ten woman group. The first in rank after her lived in Ginoza, and the other eight in Hatsuda. These participants in the festivals and religious ceremonies were known as kannushi-san (Japanese) or kamichuyu (Okinawan). The priestess was assisted by a second woman, first in rank after the noro herself (uchigami in Okinawan), a third (nigami in Okinawan), and the fourth (yurashigami in Okinawan). The fifth to ninth women were learners and followers. They could be either young or old women. All ranks wore a simple garment, similar in cut to a kimono, made of white gauze-like material. For a head covering, a piece of the same material was wrapped around the head like a towel. Four men attended the priestess and her women assistants but only at public ceremonies.

6 The material which follows is based on information from a lady about 50, a resident of Hatsuda, who was a second ranking assistant (nigami) to the noro. She now operates a tiny store in Hatsuda. [115]

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